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S E C R E T VIENNA 000165

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/AGS, EUR/PRA, NP/ECNP, INR/SPM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/20/2015

TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [ETTC](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: AUSTRIA: SNIPER RIFLES TO IRAN: FURTHER SHIPMENTS
STALLED?

REF: A. STATE 9770

[B](#). VIENNA 37

[C](#). 04 VIENNA 4393

Classified By: AMBASSADOR W.L. LYONS BROWN.

REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[1](#). (S) After the Ambassador's January 18 meeting with Austrian Interior Minister Liese Prokop (reported septel), Helmut Krehlik (strictly protect), head of the Economics Ministry's Export and Import Control Division, called Econ Unit Chief to ask for an urgent appointment. Krehlik said that Steyr-Mannlicher had shipped "most" of the 800 sniper rifles which the Austrian government had approved for sale to Iran in November 2004. However, he clarified that Steyr-Mannlicher president Wolfgang Furlinger had not/not formally submitted two additional applications for the export of an additional 1600 rifles to Iran. (Note: Krehlik had called us on December 22 to alert us to these new applications. End note.) Krehlik speculated that Furlinger had decided not to submit the additional applications because "he knows he would have difficulty getting them approved." Krehlik told us that he had heard that Furlinger was asking the Interior Minister to designate the sniper rifles as "munition items" instead of "war items," in order to make it easier to win approval. Krehlik said he thought the Interior Ministry would not/not accede to Furlinger's request.

[2](#). (S) Krehlik expressed concern on other pending sales applications. He said Steyr-Mannlicher had applied in August 2004 to export five pistols to Iran. In that case, the Foreign Ministry had sent Krehlik a memo raising serious concerns about such a sale. Krehlik said Furlinger was using the application as a trial run for an application of 5,000 pistols. In another case, Steyr-Mannlicher's competitor Glock had applied to export three pistols to Iran. Krehlik speculated that this was also a trial run for a larger sale. Krehlik said he was concerned because the Iranian end-user of the Glock pistols was the State Purchasing Organization, an entity Krehlik identified as a procurer for the Iranian Defense Ministry. Krehlik said he had sought "several times" to dissuade Glock from pursuing the sale.

[3](#). (S) Comment: The MFA and the Interior Ministry are on the hook to get back to the Ambassador with information regarding the November rifle shipment and the two later proposed applications. We hope these sources will confirm Krehlik's information. The Ambassador intends to call Secretary General Kyrle in the MFA and/or Minister Prokop in Interior, if he has not heard back from them within a reasonable time period. He plans in any case to reiterate the general message regarding the USG's concerns on any arms sales to Iran.
Brown